

585 bride's entry into the house, and then at last the girl is led into the house and presented to her husband's ancestors. Thus begins the lifelong process of her incorporation into her husband's family. The birth of her first child will affirm her position in the family, but it will not be until she dies and takes her own place on the family altar that the process will be completed.

The festivities which occupy the remainder of the day, and which often last on into the following day, are much less concerned with the bride and groom than they are with the importance of their two families. The female guests in the house pass in and out of the new couple's bedroom for another look at the new bride, and his friends joke with the groom and attempt to get him drunk, but otherwise the bride and groom pass from the center of attention. At the major feast of the day it is 585
• 273 the groom's mother's brother, not the groom, who sits at the seat of
521
[604] honor, and the various speeches and toasts offered by local notables tend to be more concerned with the family's reputation and status than with the happiness and future of the newlyweds. The family history is described as long and illustrious; the names of notable members of the family are recalled for renewed honor; and assurances are given that the family's name will shine and their fortune prosper. The more the speakers drink, the more lavish and general the congratulations. The schoolmaster is praised for his erudition and scholarly accomplishments; the village mayor is thanked for his great contributions to the general welfare; and the community is described again and again as having a widely respected reputation in the eyes of its neighbors. Each new

585 toast introduces a new round of flattery, and every drink exaggerates
[293] the virtues of those present. Later that evening some of the younger
[52] guests make their way to the newlyweds' quarters to hold something like
a shivaree, but this is only as a side show to the feasting in the
ancestral hall which may last until late at night.

*593 The formal marriage procedure is brought to completion in three days
585 after the wedding when the bride pays her first visit to her parental
family. From a functional point of view, the significance of this visit
lies in the fact that it constitutes a declaration of the bride's new
status vis-à-vis her consanguineal relatives. She left her parental
home as a daughter and an intimate member of her natal family; she
now returns as a member of another family and as a guest. Her mother
or her sisters serve her tea in the kāng-thiū: as they might serve a
respected guest, and it is expected that these former intimates will
now make at least a show of formality. The ceremony is, in fact,
referred to as cūē-khṣṣ, "being a guest." After this first visit the
the bride may return to her home from time to time to visit with her
relatives and commiserate with her mother, and it is expected of her
that she return for a somewhat more formal visit every New Year. As
time passes, however, and the girl becomes more and more secure in her
new home, she visits her parental family less and less often, so that
one finds that many older women do not return to their natal home even
at New Years. As one informant explained, "Once you have children you
are too busy, and then your parents die so that you don't know anyone
there anymore, and finally you just don't feel like going back there."

cans salvaged from the garbage dumps of American military installations. In the next store a pall of dust hangs on everything. This is a small coal-kerosene-rice store, and the debris from the hand-operated rice polishing mill makes everything, even the black coal, a shade lighter. Toward the back there are baskets of charcoal and bundles of neatly cut twigs and branches, carefully graded and tied. Against the back wall are stacked bottles of wine and beer, their necks entwined with cheap handmade rope. The piquant, not quite fresh smell in the air comes from next door, the store we called the pickle shop for want of a better name. Huge jars of pickles—pickled cabbage, pickled radishes, pickled eggplants, even pickled eggs—fill the front of the store, the more expensive delicacies displayed in glass jars, the more routine in heavy, waist-high earthenware crocks. Only a few are preserved in vinegar. Most are salted and allowed to season for several months, or dried in the hot, baking summer sun, or soaked in soy sauce, herbs, or wine. The unlighted rear of the store is brightened somewhat by the gaudy labels on a few shelves of canned foods. They are expensive, not as tasty as the local product, and often dangerous with age and contamination. Nearer the front are the precious tins of powdered milk, a mother's only solution to a dry breast in this damp climate where dairy cows quickly succumb to tuberculosis.

The heart of the town, or at least the source of the greatest commotion each forenoon, is the roofed food market. The market would be difficult to locate were it not for the overflow of shoppers and farmers. The entrance is little more than a narrow alley between two store-fronts, an alley made even narrower by the half dozen farmers squatting there amid their baskets of produce. These are men who can't afford to rent stalls under the protection of the roof or farmers who happen that day to have some surplus vegetables or a sudden shortage of cash. Just a few steps down the alley is the open market shed itself and what seems to be a disorganized profusion of produce heaped on trays, piled in baskets, spread on tables, or simply stacked on the bare packed earth: fresh onions, cucumbers, garlic, an infinite variety of melons and squash, eggplants, bamboo shoots, and occasionally fresh mushrooms brought in by some enterprising merchant with Taipei contacts. Scattered between and on top of the vegetables are bananas, papayas, pineapples, guavas, and a few precious apples imported from Japan. Adding a sinister note to the confusion of produce are the meatstalls with carcasses of pigs hanging on huge hooks,

Lim Hue-lieng: An Eldest Son

53

of generosity is not characteristic of a man who has risen through the ranks of the *lo mua*. His competitors had more than likely caught him in practices unfair even among the *lo mua*. On the day that he was to divide the money with them, there was a problem. The officials of the winery had to delay their payment. Lim Hue-lieng informed the men of this and they seemed to accept it, even inviting him to a dinner the following evening. Lim Hue-lieng was not paid off the next day either, and when he explained the problem to his "friends," they gave every indication of believing him. 596+
159+

A Taiwanese dinner party is a seemingly informal affair that operates under very formal rules. Even in the village, feasts are rarely simple expressions of hospitality. The guests are poor relatives, wealthy relatives to whom the host is indebted, friends, business associates, and men to whom he owes social or monetary debts. In some families these tend to be quite large affairs with four or five tables of eight men each. There is another kind of dinner party—more common to townsfolk but occasionally given by the wealthier village men—which can only be described as select. These parties are limited to one table of guests and are usually held in a restaurant rather than a home. Each guest is invited for a definite if unspecified purpose: the man who is pressed by his host into the most honored position at the table knows he is being thanked for a favor, or about to be asked for one; the guest who finds himself sitting in an undesirable spot is silently informed that the favor he requested will not be granted; another guest is made to understand that his friendship is valued but should not be pressed by a special request. In Taipei it is common for businessmen to give a feast for their employees during the New Year's season. An employee whose performance has been unsatisfactory will find himself in the honored position: his employer is giving him face before his fellow workers and also making it clear that he should resign the following week. 574
[466]

Be it a select dinner party or a huge village feast, the duty of the host is to urge as much food as possible down his guests and as much wine. Wine drinking at a banquet is the least informal aspect of the whole affair. If he wishes to insult no one (and this may very well not be his wish) each guest must drink a toast to every man at his table at some time during the evening. No guest can refuse to drink the toast without causing serious insult or involving himself in a long explanation. Since drinking in the village only occurs in conjunction with 574
293 •

574 course after course of heavy food, there is little drunkenness, but the
273 goal of the good host is to get most of his guests at least pink-cheeked
or his dinner is not a success and his hospitality may be questioned.
The businessman or official who has to look in on two or three of
these ordeals in an evening learns to shift the favored "drain the
glass" toast to a moderate sip. Not to develop this skill invites disaster
since it is under these conditions that the major decisions in a man's
business life are made.

+596 Considerable planning must have gone into the dinner party for
+159 Lim Hue-lieng. He could avoid without offense as many toasts as any
man, and he had a reputation for holding his liquor well. Perhaps that
evening he was feeling more cautious about giving offense; perhaps, as
some villagers believe, his liquor was tampered with; or perhaps he
was simply careless. At any rate, he was toasted again and again and
proved no match for the concerted efforts of seven men. He was
brought home nearly senseless with drink. During the night, some
unknown men secretly entered his house and efficiently severed the
tendons of his knees, elbows, and fingers. The attack was designed to
cripple, not to kill. It was two years before Lim Hue-lieng's wounds
healed. When they did, he could neither walk nor clench his fists.

Lim Hue-lieng had loyal followers and friends, but during his
long convalescence they necessarily formed new alliances and became
involved in other business enterprises. When his injuries healed, it was
apparent to everyone that he no longer had the physical strength
prerequisite to his former occupations. A man who cannot walk
cannot gather up gangs of men quickly, and a man who cannot clench
his fists cannot enforce his terms. Lim Hue-lieng sold his house in
Tapu and moved himself and his second wife and child back to his
father's house in Peihotien.

*596 Lim So-lan told me about those last years with Lim Hue-lieng:
+159 "We lived with them for over two years. I had never done much heavy
+593 work before, but after we moved there I had to do all kinds of hard
595 work, even in the fields. I cried a lot in my stomach in those days, but
606 I didn't complain. I gritted my teeth and did any kind of work that
had to be done, and so his parents liked me, and for awhile we all got
along very well. Then my husband decided to adopt A-hua, and that
made his first wife angry. She went around telling everybody, 'They
can't make any money and yet they go ahead and adopt another child
for other people to feed.' She didn't dare say anything about it to him

252 Most village women are proud of their abilities as cooks.

462 Several village men are also extremely skilled, hiring out
[463] as cooks on special occasions and almost every village man
can prepare an adequate meal. Some men cook quite often
in their homes although their wives were considered the
regular cooks. When a woman is working for wages on a job
while the man is home early, he will often prepare dinner.
Also, if a wife is sick, a man will substitute in the kit-
chen if there is no other adult female kinsman in the
household. There are only a few men who have never sub-
stituted as cooks for their wives. Nevertheless, when a
man cooks for either special occasions or as a substitute,
women will almost always clean the kitchen and wash the
dishes.

263 Peanut oil, ginger, soy sauce, red sauce, and
252 monosodium glutamate are important items in cooking. Most
dishes are combinations of various ingredients and spices.
It is often jokingly stated that no Chinese dish is com-
posed of less than ten items. Cooking techniques include
sauteing, deep frying, and steaming. Of course, boiling
is important for soups.

271 Water can not be consumed without boiling it first.

272 Since Sanlei was a tea processing village, tea usually
replaces plain boiled water. However, the tea is usually
very weak and of poorer grades; a single set of tea leaves
• 273 was reused several times. Wine or beer is for special
occasions only although there are a couple of men in the

273 area who drink often. Spirits were never supposed to be
272 consumed without simultaneously eating. The village
273 stores also stock soft drinks but these too tend to be
264 reserved for special occasions. Soft drinks and spirits
are provided at all banquets.

262 There were two kinds of days, sharply contrasted in
264 the kinds and quantities of food: regular days and special
524 days. The special days were the religious holidays and
special life crises events, i.e., marriage, engagement,
funeral, certain birthdays, etc. One set of religious
holidays occurred twice each month on the lunar calendar
(see Chapter VIII). The other holidays were on regular
dates, rarely less than at least one each month. On spec-
ial days the food was rich, dinner usually including pork,
fish, and fowl, whereas the diet previously described was
for regular days.

264 On special days, there was a tendency for people to
eat dinner together at a table. Often, eating had to be
in shifts for few households had more than one table while
some families were quite large (see Chapter V). Most of
the time, eating is during a single time period but in a
haphazard fashion. Each person gets food in the kitchen
from the cook and eats at the table or perhaps, out in the
[562] courtyard. Men are supposed to eat first, but it appears
[855] that small children are usually first. While most meals
are eaten at home, lunch is occasionally eaten in the

511 and two nearly-helpless old people are all dependent on
736 the labor of two mature adults, one of whom must spend a
major portion of her time in nurturing activities.

511 The family diet is fairly rich and Lin An-hwei
[262] shares a bottle of beer each evening with another village
• [273] Mainlander. Since the bottles are big, they take turns
[435] buying one but the cost to Lin's family still exceeds
\$250.00 per month. Before the recent medical expenses put
them so far in debt, the family was doing quite well finan-
[525] cially but was not investing in land or business. They
ate well and Lin gambled once a month with five Mainlanders
who lived in the area and he also bought many lottery
tickets. His gambling and participation in the lotteries
have ceased but he continues to drink.

[888] The expensive medical treatments have been given
up as part of the immediate plans of waiting for the old
ones to die. After paying for their burial expenses, there
are no further plans other than discharging the family
debts.

511 The final contrast is with members of the lowest
621 class group in the community in terms of economics al-
565 though the village class structure is not sharply demar-
cated. Villagers will usually claim that everyone is
nearly the same in the village but when pressed, will point
out a few families who are somewhat richer than average
and several families which are very poor but usually

796 disbursements and posted it on the temple bulletin board.
783 The account included a list of donors, household head only.
794 in rank order by size of donation with every village house-
hold listed as contributing something. There was nearly
\$700.00 left over so the committee decided to spend \$60.00
for a temple scroll and to donate the balance to the li
school.

796 The ceremony appeared to be over but its latent
783 effects will long linger. Already comparisons were being
621 made with a ceremony conducted over forty years previously
in Sanlei and with other ceremonies held in surrounding
villages. With the requirement that many villagers had had
to work together to conduct the affair, the ceremony was a
strong integrative agency for the community. It also
served to elevate Sanlei's status in the area and by having
many guests, past favors were repaid and new debts were
[869] created. Young men vividly learned of the powers of the
gods--the fire walk was spectacular for participant and
796 observer alike. Tension was also released by the many gay
793 parties, especially since they included much drinking.
• 273 The drunken villager is either very happy or very quiet
and withdrawn with an extremely rare appearance of aggres-
sive behavior. Since it is considered very bad to drink
one's self into a stupor more than once in a lifetime,
most men learn to control their liquor, i.e., know how
much they can drink and act accordingly.

454

275 games and a gambling game something like paper, rock, and
265 scissors.

484
177

Middle-aged married people, without their children, go for a two to five day sightseeing tour on a bus, a unique form of recreation started by the Japanese. Two men from Erhlei organize a trip once every eight or nine months for forty people or so, all from Talei Li. The trip is not very expensive and everyone seems to have a good time and later, talks about the trips for years.

574

Dinner and drinking parties are also important and being a host is both enjoyable and establishes one's social position. Men play drinking games at dinners because one never drinks without also eating. During a dinner, one can not drink alone; he must find someone to drink with. Toasts in the previously described manner are kan bei (bottoms up), ban bei (half the glass), or swei bien (as much as you like). A goal of the drinking game is to stay sober while getting others drunk for to become drunk is to lose face. People become very skilled at the drinking games based on a strategy that when your glass is near empty, you should get a man with a full glass to kan bei (bottoms up) in the hope to have him drink much while you drink little. He should, in this situation, try to get the toast to be swei bien (as much as you like).